

Message Text

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ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 VO-03 AID-05

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FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

SECSTATE WASHDC PRORIORITY 7676

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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HONG KONG PASS DIDIR INS

SECSTATE PASS ORM, EA/RA, EA/IMS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: CEPROGRAM: STAUTS REPORT - INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN
MALAYSIA

REF: HONG KONG 7290, KUALA LUMPUR 3483

1. EMBOFF, JOINT VOLAG REP RETURNED 15 JUNE FROM TRIP TO INTERVIEW
722 REFUGEES AT FOUR LOCATIONS IN JOHORE. FORMS 590 AND 510
CURRENTLY BEING PREPARED FOR APPROXIMATELY 120 CASES, 400 PERSONS.
ALL REFUGEES IN JOHORE WILL BE MOVED TO ONE LOCATION, PULAU TENGAH,
A SMALL ISLAND APPROXIMATELY 10 MILES
EAST OF MERSING. UNHCR ESTIMATES MOVEMENT WILL TAKE PLACE IN
APPROXIMATELY TWO MONTHS. EMB SUGGEST INS MAY WISH TO WAIT
UNTIL AFTER MOVEMENT TAKES PLACE TO INTERVIEW JOHORE REFUGEES, AS
CURRENT LOCATIONS ARE REMOTE AND TRAVEL DIFFICULT.

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2. FROM DISCUSSIONS WITH MARINE POLICE, BOAT OWNERS, AND RED
CRESCENT OFFICIALS IN JOHORE, IT APPEARS THAT LEAP DAL IS IN NO REPEA
T
NO DANGER OF SINKING. THIS STORY, WHICH WAS REPORTED BY UNHCR REP
SAMPATKUMAR TO MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT
COUNTRIES, WAS APPARENTLY PUT OUT BY GOM TO UNHCR OFFICIALS TO
INCREASE PRESSURE FOR SOLUTION OF LEAP DAL PROBLEM. AUSTRALIAN

OFFICER WORKING ON REFUGEE PROBLEMS CALLED EMBOFF TO REPORT THIS NEWS. HE INDICATED AUSTRALIANS ONLY AGREED TO ACCEPT 50 LEAP DAL REFUGEES BECAUSE UNCHR'S FALSE REPORT THAT THE SHIP WAS SINKING. HE INDICATED AUSTRALIANS ARE EXTREMELY UPSET WITH UNHCR AND WILL NO LONGER BELIEVE ANYTHING UNHCR REPORTS. HE ALSO INDICATED THAT THIS INCIDENT MAY SERIOUSLY EFFECT AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE CONTRIBUTION TO THE REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM IN MALAYSIA.

3. EMBOFF, JOINT VOLAG REP WILL BE MAKING TRIP TO KOTA BARU, PULAU BESAR, KUANTAN WITHIN NEXT THREE WEEKS TO INTERVIEW ESTIMATED 300-400 NEW ARRIVALS IN THESE LOCATIONS.

4. EMB HAS RECEIVED LETTER FROM TRAN NGOC NINH, FORMER MINISTER OF CULTURE, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE 1966-1967, ADDRESSED TO UNDER SECRETARY HABIB. (TEXT BY SEPTTEL) TRAN IS ABOARD SHIP WITH 133 REFUGEES AT PULAU BESAR, WHICH APPARENTLY IS IN DANGER OF BEING PUSHED OFF. ANOTHER REFUGEE BOAT WITH 33 REFUGEES ABOARD IS TIED UP IN TELOK ANSON, TOWN ON THE WEST COAST OF MALAYSIA APPROXIMATELY 100 MILES NORTH OF K.L. BOAT WAS APPARENTLY PUSHED OFF FROM SEVERAL LOCATIONS IN MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE BEFORE SAILING UP STRAITS OF MALACCA. SIX REFUGEES FROM THIS VESSELS ARE CURRENTLY IN HOSPITAL SUFFERING FROM UNIDENTIFIED CONTAGIOUS DISEASE. HEALTH AUTHORITIES FEARFUL OF EPIDEMIC ABOARD THE BOAT.

5. THE LARGE NUMBER F ARRIVAL S CURRENTLY TAKING PLACE IS OUT-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STRIPPING BOTH OUR AND UNCHR'S ABILITY TO KEEP TRACK OF THE SITUATION

UNHCR ESTIMATES THAT THE CURRENT NUMBER OF BOAT CASE REFUGEES IN MALAYSIA IS APPROACHING 3,000 DEPENDING ON HOW MANY ARE BEING PUSHED OFF OR ARE LANDING AT ANY ONE TIME.

6. OFFICIAL FROM MFA TOLD EMBOFF THAT RECENT INCIDENT IN WHICH 33 REFUGEES DROWNED OFF SABAH (REPORT BY SEPTTEL) AFTER BEING REFUSED PERMISSION TO LAND IN SARAWAK AND SABAH HAS CAUSED CONSTERNATION IN GOM. MFA APPARENTLY PUSHING FOR MORE LENIENT POLICY TOWARDS REFUGEES, WHILE NSC CONTINUES TO FAVOR HARD LINE.
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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